



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/816,372	03/26/2001	Yasuhiko Kanemasa	826.1710	7328

21171 7590 06/15/2006

STAAS & HALSEY LLP
SUITE 700
1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

EXAMINER

ZHEN, LI B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2194

DATE MAILED: 06/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/816,372

Applicant(s)

KANEMASA ET AL.

Examiner

Li B. Zhen

Art Unit

2194

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.


WILLIAM THOMSON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1 – 23 are pending in the current application.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's response with regards to the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejections is persuasive. The rejections of claims 1-12, 15, 16 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph have been withdrawn.

3. Applicant's arguments filed 03/21/2006 with regards to the prior art rejections have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. In response to the Non-Final Office Action dated 11/17/2005, applicant argues:

(1) Saito does not exchange information "that associates the process executed by the process executing device with the process executed by ... [an]other process executing device based on correspondence relation between the process executing data and the process executed by the other process executing device" [p. 9, lines 12 – 20]; and

(2) Saito does not disclose any feature comparable to the "interprocess association information" exchanged between process executing device recited in claim 1 and any other process executing device in the system in which the process executing device recited in claim 1 resides [p. 9, line 21 – p. 10, line 12].

As to argument (1), examiner respectfully disagrees and submits that Saito anticipates claims 1 – 3 and 9 – 17, 19, and 21 – 23. Saito teaches an interprocess association information interchanging unit [document management unit (220)] interchanging with the other process executing device [the remote server (110)] interprocess association information [shipping document (160)] that associates the process executed by the process executing device with the process executed by the other process executing device [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data, Fig. 2; col. 4,

Art Unit: 2194

line 56 – col. 5, line 7] based on a correspondence relation between the process executing data received from the process executing data interchanging unit and the process executed by the other process executing device [BP connection data management unit (230) and the BP definition management unit (240) manage the BP connection data (170) created by the user and the BP definition (150); col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7]. Saito's shipping document corresponds to information that associates processes because the shipping document associates the exit node of one business process (BP) at a server with the entrance node of another BP at another server [col. 6, lines 16 – 35, see also Fig. 3]. The server divides one business process into a pluralities of BP definitions based on the location of the processing node [col. 9, line 52 – col. 10, line 19]; therefore, the BP definition on each of the servers defines a process that is part of the business process. The shipping document associates processes executing on each server [process executing device] by linking the exit node of one server with the entrance node of another server [col. 6, lines 16 – 35]. The association information [shipping document] is based on BP connection data [Fig. 2; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7], which defines a correspondence relation between the process executing data received from the process executing data interchanging unit and the process executed by the other process executing device [i.e. BP connection table (500) comprises the previous BP exit location (510) composed of the BP definition name (511) and the exit node name (512), and the next BP entrance location (520) composed of the BP definition name (521), the entrance node name (522) and the management server name (523); the information to link between the exit node and entrance node is stored therein; col. 5, lines 51 – col. 6, line 3].

In response to argument (2), examiner respectfully disagrees and submits that the shipping document corresponds to the association information as claimed [see the rejection to argument (1) above and the 35 U.S.C. 102 rejection below].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

Art Unit: 2194

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1 – 3 and 9 – 17, 19, and 21 – 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,032,124 to Saito et al. [hereinafter Saito, cited in the previous office action].

6. As to claim 1, Saito teaches a process executing device [server 110, Fig. 1; col. 4, lines 12 – 23] in a data interchange system [workflow system; col. 4, lines 23 – 32] for executing a series of process flows [coordination of the BP definitions describing the business processes inside said sites placed under decentralized management in each site; col. 3, lines 9 – 25] among a plurality of process executing devices [col. 10, lines 40 – 62], said process executing device comprising:

a process executing data interchanging unit [CALL node, Fig. 9; col. 7, lines 16 – 30] interchanging process executing data for executing a process with another process executing device [shipping document (160) delivered from the CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition (150), Fig. 9, col. 7, lines 15 – 30], and

an interprocess association information interchanging unit interchanging with the other process executing device interprocess association information that associates the process executed by the process executing device with the process executed by the other process executing device [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data, Fig. 2; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7] based on a correspondence relation between the process executing data received from the process executing data interchanging unit and the process executed by the other process executing device [BP connection data management unit (230) and the BP definition management unit (240) manage the BP connection data (170) created by the user and the BP definition (150), respectively, and

Art Unit: 2194

execute retrieval process at the retrieval request, notifying other processing units of the retrieved result; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7].

7. As to claim 2, Saito teaches the interprocess association information is information that associates the processes with one another using a part of the process executing data [BP definition; col. 5, lines 8 – 29].

8. As to claim 3, Saito teaches interprocess association information is part of the process executing data, and is the information for associating processes with each other using data that takes an exclusive value for each process of the series of process flows [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7].

9. As to claim 9, Saito teaches the interprocess association information interchanging unit dynamically determines the other process executing device to which the interprocess association information is transmitted using a part of the process executing data [next BP location described in the BP definition; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7].

10. As to claim 10, Saito teaches the process executing device in the data interchange system further comprising:

an association definition storing unit storing a method to define the interprocess association as an association definition [BP definition (150) contains the entrance node and exit node, in addition to the processing node representing one process to be treated in the workflow subsystem (180) to which the BP definition managing server (110) pertains; col. 5, line 8 – 29]; and

an association unit associating the process executed by the process executing device with the process executed by the other process executing device [document management unit (220); col. 4, lines 56 – 67].

11. As to claim 11, Saito teaches the process executing device in the data interchange system further comprising:

a device interprocess association unit associating the processes executed by the process executing device that are identical to the process executed by the other process executing device using the interprocess association information transmitted from the other process executing device [BP connection table (500) comprises the previous BP exit location (510) composed of the BP definition name (511) and the exit node name (512), and the next BP entrance location (520) composed of the BP definition name (521), the entrance node name (522) and the management server name (523); col. 5, line 52 – col. 6, line 3].

12. As to claim 12, Saito teaches a data interchange system for executing a series of process flows among a plurality of process executing devices using a process executing data interchanging unit interchanging process executing data between the process executing devices [col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 8], comprising:

an interprocess association information storing unit storing an interprocess association information that associates a process executed by each of said plurality of process executing devices with the process executed by the other process executing device based on a correspondence relation between process executing data received from the process executing data interchanging unit and the process executed by the other process executing device, which is transmitted by the plurality of process executing devices [BP definition (150) contains the entrance node and exit node, in addition to the processing node representing one process to be treated in the workflow subsystem (180) to which the BP definition managing server (110) pertains; col. 5, line 8 – 29 and col. 5, line 52 – col. 6, line 3]; and

an interprocess association information distribution unit distributing the interprocess association information stored in said interprocess association information storing unit to the process executing device which is related to the interprocess association information [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data (170); col. 4, line 56 - col. 5, line 7].

13. As to claim 13, Saito teaches an addressee definition storing unit storing a method for determining an addressee of the interprocess association information as an addressee definition, and wherein said interprocess association information distribution unit distributes, interprocess association information based on the addressee definition [BP connection table (500) comprises the previous BP exit location (510) composed of the BP definition name (511) and the exit node name (512), and the next BP entrance location (520) composed of the BP definition name (521), the entrance node name (522) and the management server name (523); the information to link between the exit node and entrance node; col. 5, line 52 – col. 6, line 2].

14. As to claim 14, Saito teaches interprocess association information distribution unit dynamically determines the addressee of the process association information using a part of a process executing data transmitted from the plurality of process executing devices [searches the entries of the BP connection table (500) where the BP definition name and the exit node name given as parameters have the same value as the previous BP exit location (510) (710); then the next BP entrance location (520) out of the entries of the BP connection table (500) obtained by retrieval is returned to the document management unit (220); col. 6, lines 35 – 57].

15. As to claim 15, Saito teaches a data interchange system [workflow system; col. 4, lines 23 – 32] for executing a series of process flows [col. 3, lines 9 – 25] among a

Art Unit: 2194

plurality of process executing devices [col. 10, lines 40 – 62] using a process executing data interchanging unit [CALL node, Fig. 9; col. 7, lines 16 – 30] interchanging process executing data between the process executing devices [col. 7, lines 15 – 30], comprising:

- an interprocess association unit associating the processes executed among the plurality of process executing devices based on a correspondence relation between process executing data received from the process executing data interchanging unit and a process using the data transmitted from the plurality of process executing devices and generating process association information [BP definition (150) contains the entrance node and exit node, in addition to the processing node representing one process to be treated in the workflow subsystem (180) to which the BP definition managing server (110) pertains; col. 5, line 8 – 29 and col. 5, line 52 – col. 6, line 3]; and

- an interprocess association information distribution unit distributing the process association information generated by said interprocess association unit to the process executing device which is related to the interprocess association information [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data (170); col. 4, line 56 - col. 5, line 7].

16. As to claim 16, Saito teaches a data interchange device for interchanging data concerning a process included in a series of process flows with an external device [shipping document (160) delivered from the CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition (150), Fig. 9, col. 7, lines 15 – 30], comprising:

- an executing data interchanging unit interchanging a process executing data with the external device [shipping document (160) delivered from the CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition (150), Fig. 9, col. 7, lines 15 – 30]; and

- an interprocess association information interchanging unit interchanging with the external device interprocess association information which associates a process executed by the process executing device with the process executed by the external

Art Unit: 2194

device [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data, Fig. 2; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7] based on a correspondence relation between the process executing data received from the executing data interchanging unit and the process executed by the external device [BP connection data management unit (230) and the BP definition management unit (240) manage the BP connection data (170) created by the user and the BP definition (150), respectively, and execute retrieval process at the retrieval request, notifying other processing units of the retrieved result; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7].

17. As to claim 17, Saito teaches a data interchange method [workflow system; col. 4, lines 23 – 32] for interchanging data concerning a process included in a series of process flows with an external device [col. 7, lines 15 – 30], comprising:

interchanging process executing data with the external device [shipping document (160) delivered from the CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition (150), Fig. 9, col. 7, lines 15 – 30] via a first communication route [from CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition; col. 7, lines 15 - 30]; and

interchanging with the external device, via a second communication route [from document management unit to remote server; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7], interprocess association information which associates the process executed by the process executing device with the process executed by the external device [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data, Fig. 2; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7] based on a correspondence relation between the process executing data and the process executed by the external device [BP connection data management unit (230) and the BP definition management unit (240) manage the BP connection data (170) created by the user and the BP

Art Unit: 2194

definition (150), respectively, and execute retrieval process at the retrieval request, notifying other processing units of the retrieved result; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7].

18. As to claim 19, this is a product claim that corresponds to method claim 17; note the rejection to claim 17 above, which also meets this product claim.

19. As to claim 21, this is similar in scope to claim 16; therefore claim 21 is rejected for the same reasons as claim 16 above.

20. As to claim 22, this is similar in scope to claim 17; therefore claim 22 is rejected for the same reasons as claim 17 above.

21. As to claim 23, Saito teaches a method for interchanging data between an external device [col. 7, lines 15 – 30] and a processor executing a process in a series of process flows [node 2 (310), node 3 (315) and node 4 (320) are processing nodes; col. 5, lines 8 – 28], comprising:

obtaining, via a first communication route [from document management unit to remote server; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7], interprocess association information associating first and second processes respectively executed by the processor and the external device [document management unit (220) manages the shipping document (160) and the next BP location described in the BP definition (150) by associating them, and executes preprocessing to transmit the shipping document (160) to the remote server (110), by referring to the BP connection data, Fig. 2; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7] based on a correspondence relation between the second process and process executing data of the first process BP connection data management unit (230) and the BP definition management unit (240) manage the BP connection data (170) created by the user and the BP definition (150), respectively, and execute retrieval process at the retrieval request, notifying other processing units of the retrieved result; col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7]; and

interchanging, via a second communication route [from CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition; col. 7, lines 15 - 30], the process executing data [shipping document (160) delivered from the CALL node to the process node in the remote BP definition (150), Fig. 9, col. 7, lines 15 – 30] and the interprocess association information between the processor and the external device [col. 4, line 56 – col. 5, line 7].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

22. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

23. **Claims 4 – 8, 18 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito in view of U.S. Patent NO. 6,442,528 to Notani et al. [hereinafter Notani, cited in the previous office action].**

24. As to claims 4, 18 and 20, Saito does not teaches the interprocess association information interchanging unit interchanges the interprocess association information with the other process executing device using a transfer method different from the method used by said process executing data interchanging unit

However, Notani teaches a multi-enterprise workflows with synchronous, asynchronous, sub-workflow, and-splits, or-splits, synchronization-joins, heterocast-splits, heterocast-joins [col. 6, lines 7 – 33] and interchanging interprocess association information with the other process executing device using a transfer method different from the method used by the process executing data interchanging unit [col. 7, lines 1 – 11 and col. 8, lines 11 - 24].

25. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of interchanging interprocess association

information with the other process executing device using a transfer method different from the method used by the process executing data interchanging unit as taught by Notani to the invention of Saito because this provides support for collaboration over existing web protocols, which can be important to rapid deployment since it does not require modification or reconfiguration of an existing web infrastructure and saves time from not having to modify carefully designed firewall and security infrastructures that may already be in place [col. 17, lines 55 - 65 of Notani].

26. As to claim 5, Saito as modified teaches the interprocess association information interchanging unit interchanges the interprocess association information at a timing that is not synchronized with the timing for interchanging the process executing data by said process executing data interchanging unit [col. 6, lines 7 – 33 of Notani]. As for the motivation to combine Saito with Notani, see the rejection to claim 4 above.

27. As to claim 6, Saito as modified teaches the interprocess association information interchanging unit periodically and collectively interchanges the interprocess association information [col. 4, lines 46 – 60 of Notani]. As for the motivation to combine Saito with Notani, see the rejection to claim 4 above.

28. As to claim 7, Saito as modified teaches wherein said interprocess association information interchanging unit transmits to the other process executing device inquiry information for inquiring about the process which is executed by the other process executing device and is related with the process executed by the process executing device in addition to the process association information [called-out retrieval function searches the entries of the BP connection table (500) where the BP definition name and the exit node name given as parameters have the same value as the previous BP exit location (510) (710); col. 6, lines 35 – 57 of Saito], and wherein the other process executing device further comprises an inquiry response unit associating the processes executed by both process executing devices and responding to the inquiry information from the process executing device [the next BP entrance location (520) out of the

Art Unit: 2194

entries of the BP connection table (500) obtained by retrieval is returned to the document management unit (220); col. 6, lines 35 – 60 of Saito].

29. As to claim 8, Saito as modified teaches a process association information request unit requesting said interprocess association information interchanging unit in the other process executing device to transmit the interprocess association information necessary for an inquiry about the process which is executed by the other process executing device and is which related to the process executed by the process executing device in addition to the process association information before the inquiry [col. 6, lines 35 – 57 of Saito]; and an inquiry unit for associating the processes executed by both process executing devices using the transmitted process association information and performing the inquiry based on the association result [col. 9, lines 25 – 45 of Saito].

Conclusion

30. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

CONTACT INFORMATION

31. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Li B. Zhen whose telephone number is (571) 272-3768. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 8:30am - 5pm.


Art Unit: 2194

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William Thomson can be reached on 571-272-3718. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Li B. Zhen
Examiner
Art Unit 2194

lbz


WILLIAM THOMSON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100